

Overseas Press Club Bulletin

April, 1990

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Schorr Reports On Press Freedom In Nicaragua Vote

Editor's Note: OPC Freedom of the Press Committee Chairman Norman Schorr was in Nicaragua to research a story for this year's OPC DATELINE, and to see how free the press was to report the elections there.

By Norman A. Schorr

Five of the six journalists whose travel to Nicaragua to cover the elections was reportedly being delayed or denied because their visas were held up did make it into the country on time.

The visa of only one was never issued, even though he had applied twice in the months proceeding the election.

The OPC joined other press organizations in protesting to President Daniel Ortega a few weeks before the election. The OPC appeal was carried on the AP "A" wire. The next day, a representative of the Nicaraguan Foreign Ministry called the OPC to report that "no bona fide journalist would be denied a visa."

In Managua, the day before the elections, we learned that visas had been issued to the first five journalists named, that they in fact were in Nicaragua and had been issued press credentials. Only one, **Andrew Lluberes**, Latin American Editor of U.S.I.A. in Washington (formerly with Reuters, UPI, NBC and a member of OPC) had not received his visa. "Probable administrative foulup" was the reason given when OPC tried to shake loose Lluberes' visa.

After Nicaragua assigned administration of the country's Press Law to the new Supreme Electoral Council (SEC)—because of many complaints that the Ministry of Interior had been too heavy-handed in executing the law—the SEC issued new Rules of Electoral Ethics, which applied to the media, among others involved in the elections.

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Neuharth Speaks, Shaw is Presenter at OPC Dinner

Bush, Walesa Write In Dateline

Allen Neuharth, columnist, author, founder of USA Today, former chairman and CEO of Gannett, will be principle speaker at this year's OPC Awards Dinner.

Neuharth writes the weekly column "Plain Talk" in USA Today and other Gannett newspapers and is chairman of the Gannett Foundation which last year awarded nearly \$30 million in educational grants.

Neuharth will appear on his return from a 10-day trip to the Soviet Union. Author of the best-selling autobiography, "Confessions Of An S.O.B.," Neuharth made news in correspondence from abroad when he led a reporter team to 30 countries during his last year as USA Today's chief executive.

The prestigious dinner and the OPC's famed Dateline magazine this year both reflect the news media role in the great events of '89.

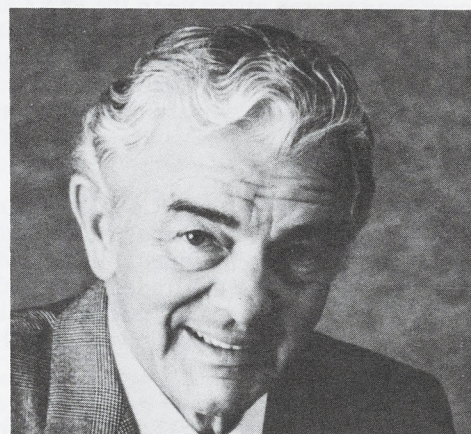
The OPC Awards will be presented in 16 categories to winners chosen from 421 entries, many of whose stories were on the democracy movements in China and Eastern Europe and on the peace movements in Central America.

The OPC's Dateline Magazine, this year published by Time Magazine and edited by Don Morrison, Time's special projects editor, features writing by President Bush and Poland's Lech Walesa within the theme, "Freedom—The Press in the New Age of Democracy."

Bernard Shaw, CNN's Washington anchor, will be presenter of the awards at:

The 51st Overseas Press Club Annual Awards Dinner in the Empire State Ballroom, Grand Hyatt Hotel, Monday, May 7, Cocktails 6 p.m., Dinner 7:15, Reserve with OPC Manager Mary Novick, (212) 983-4655.

Shaw himself covered many of the great events of '89 including 30 hours of live coverage of student demonstrations and the suppression of the democracy



NEUHARTH

movement in Beijing. He was with President Bush at the Malta Summit as well as in Eastern Europe and at the Nato meeting in Brussels.

Morrison said this year's Dateline will be the first to be fully four-color and to include an article by a photojournalist, David Burnett.

Other writers in dateline include Liu Binyan, possibly China's best-known journalist, who is now in this country; French TV reporter Olivier Warin, who covered the uprising in Romania, and Soviet journalist Yuri Shchekochikhin, who ran for and won a seat in the USSR's new Congress of the People.

Editors Wanted

Note several new members have joined the OPC Bulletin editorial board. Help share the load. Call Mary Novick (212) 983-4655

Who's doing what, when, here, there, everywhere

By AL KAFF and RALPH GARDNER

NEWS FROM THE WIRES: Leon Daniel, a 34-year veteran with UPI, has been appointed chief correspondent for the wire service. Daniel filed for UPI from the Vietnam War, Southeast Asia, Japan, Hong Kong and India and served as news editor for Europe and managing editor-international, based in Washington. At AP, **Bryan Brumley** returns to Moscow in April to become bureau chief when **Michael Putzel** returns to Washington, where he last served as White House correspondent. Brumley has worked in AP bureaus in Moscow, Warsaw, Tokyo and Washington. **Sharon Herbaugh**, AP news editor in New Delhi, has become bureau chief in Islamabad, Pakistan. **Zoheir Saade**, AP's Middle East photo editor for the past decade, has transferred from Beirut to Paris. At the United Nations, **Victoria Graham**, AP's chief correspondent, has been elected president of the U.N. Correspondents Association. Graham earlier served as bureau chief in Beijing and New Delhi.

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RESEARCHING EAST ASIA: OPCer **Fred Moritz**, formerly based in Hong Kong with *The Christian Science Monitor*, now is a research associate in the new Center for East Asian Studies at Pennsylvania State University. Earlier, Moritz taught journalism at PennState and worked as editorial page editor for the *York Daily Record* in York, Penn. Wife Kirstin works in PennState's International Programs Office.

* * *

HAWAII REUNION: OPCers **Dan Morris**, an author and book editor based in Ithaca, N.Y., and **John Luter**, journalism department chairman at the University of Hawaii and former OPC president, traded war stories in March when Morris was in Honolulu teaching writing courses at the Oceanic Institute and the University of Hawaii.

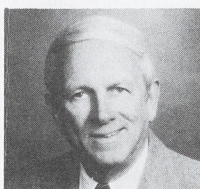
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LIBRARIANS TAKE NOTE: The March 15 issue of *Library Journal* listed "Crash: Ten Days in October . . . Will It Strike Again?," co-authored by OPCer **Al Kaff**, as one of "the 65 business books of 1989 that just might make the difference in your business collection." In selecting 65 titles for review, the magazine surveyed 500 business, finance, management, economics and international trade books. The other co-author of "Crash" that deals with the 1987 stock market crash is **Avner Arbel**, a professor of finance in Cornell University's School of Hotel Administration.

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CONGRATULATION: Member **Lawrence G. Foster**, Corporate VP of PR for Johnson & Johnson, New Brunswick, N.J., recently received the coveted Gold Anvil Award from the Public Relations Society of America. It is the organization's highest award.

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MORE HONORS: **John Wilhelm**, a World War II correspondent and past President of OPC, now Dean Emeritus of Ohio University's College of Communication, has been recognized by President Bush for pioneering a program that sends journalism students to overseas news bureaus. In his letter to Wilhelm, Bush said the Program has produced outstanding results, "and I commend you for a job well done."

ON THE MEND: The reason longtime OPC member **Hallie Burnett** hasn't visited New York recently is because she suffered a stroke some months ago at her Raleigh, N.C. home. She is now writing a new novel and her memoirs while recuperating, and would enjoy receiving mail from her many OPC friends. Send your greetings to Hallie at Springmoor, Stewart Health Center, 1500 Sawmill Rd., Raleigh, N.C., 27615.

* * *

THE WORD: Member **Denny Griswold**, Founder and Editor of *Public Relations News*, in a recent issue quotes the sage observation that "the world cannot be made safe for true PR if it cannot be made safe for journalism," urging PR professionals to help strengthen the cause of free information worldwide "by supporting journalism and protecting journalists throughout the world."

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OUR BRITISH CONNECTION: OPCer **Charles Sweeting** sent us the latest edition of his *Union Jack*, "America's only national British newspaper." It's loaded with special features, the British Commonwealth Calendar of events plus Charles's regular column, "Charles Sweeting in New York."

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ON THE MOVE: Member **Louise Boundas**, Editor of *Stereo Review*, advises that her office, Diamandis Communications, has moved to new headquarters at 1633 Broadway, New York N.Y., 10019. Phone (212) 767-6015.

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STRIPERS, PLEASE NOTE: The Pacific *Stars & Stripes* Alumni Association wants to hear from former Stripers, all of whom are invited to join the group. Contact Maurice Martin, Secretary, at 20540 Leonard Rd., Saratoga, CA, 95070. Phone (408) 867-4179.

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THOSE GOOD OLD DAYS: OPCers **Tom and Deloris Wood** have launched a fascinating new publication, *Lost Generation Journal; Americans in Paris in the 20s and 30s*. Their current issue is filled with articles about Sinclair Lewis, Henry Miller, *The Paris Herald* and more. Subscription is \$10 a year. Address: R.R.5, Box 134, Salem, MO., 65560.

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ON THE ROAD AGAIN: After being slowed down by two months hospitalization and recuperation, OPCer **Tom Mechling**, of *Washington Watch Editors*, is now back on his usual hectic travel schedule. At presstime he was en route to Moscow and the World Media Conference; then to Bangkok and Singapore via Helsinki on Finn Air's northernmost (and shortest) route to the Far East. Note Tom's new mailing address: P.O. Box 53061, Washington, D.C., 20009-9061.

* * *

Overseas members: Send items to Al Kaff, Cornell University News Service, 840 Hanshaw Road, Ithaca, N.Y. 14850-1548.

Domestic members: Drop a note or clip to Ralph Gardner, OPC Bulletin, Suite 2116, 310 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017. Pictures welcomed too!

From Page 1

Prohibiting use of certain language that insulted candidates or "showed disrespect for authorities," the ethics rules clearly restricted the press. Sections applicable to the press required "respect" for "the Constitution and laws," "the political opinions of others," "the dignity of public officials and of the leaders and activists of political parties, candidates, voters and the population in general" and "the rights of the political parties, alliances and petitioning."

Sergio Ramirez, vice president under Daniel Ortega and his running mate in the recent election, said in an interview that a reelected Sandinista administration would "be pledged to insure a free press in Nicaragua." Incidentally, Ramirez expressed interest in helping to form a PEN chapter in his country.

Access to state-owned TV and radio was a major problem in the pre-election period. Television is a state monopoly in Nicaragua, and more than 40 percent of radio stations, including the most powerful ones, are state-owned.

In December, 1989, the UN observer groups reported, "In the case of state-owned media, the amount of bias towards the governing party and the attacks on its potential rivals have exceeded all reasonable bounds." The OAS (Organization of American States) observers issued a similar statement.

At the urging of the Council of Freely Elected Heads of Government, headed by ex-president Jimmy Carter, the tight grip the government held on TV time was loosened somewhat. All political parties were guaranteed a few minutes of air time on one TV station. Since August, 1989, they had been able to broadcast their views on another.

Downhold Fete Set

That unofficial mustering of UPI, UP and Acme alumni, The Downhold Club, gathers Friday, April 27, 6-9 p.m., Park Terrace, 24 Fifth Avenue. (9th St.), NYC. Ex-Unipressers send \$30 per person to Downhold Club, Attn. Fred Ferguson, Suite 600, 450 Park Avenue South, NYC 10016. Covers open bar, hot/cold hors d'oeuvres.

Past Speakers' OPC Dias Foibles

Some fond recollections of past OPC President Jack Raymond '72-'76

By JACK RAYMOND

In 1973, Secretary of State William Rogers was the speaker at our annual dinner. Walter Cronkite was master of ceremonies. I suggested to Walter that instead of just moving the program along, he feel free to make a three-minute commentary on any subject. As it turned out, Walter did this in a part of the program that followed the Secretary's speech. Rogers had received a pretty good hand. Walter made an eloquent statement on an ancient problem—Government efforts to limit press freedom.

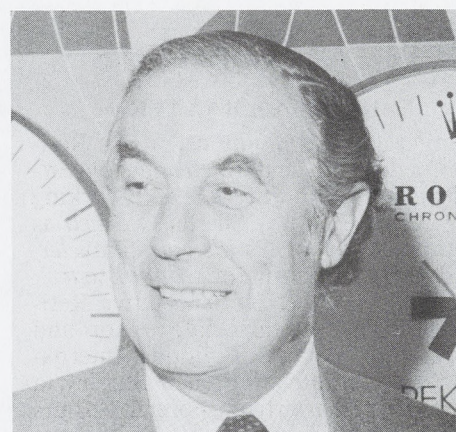
Secretary Rogers took Walter's remark personally. He turned to me and demanded "equal time." I asked Walter to relinquish the microphone to the Secretary for a second time. Rogers offered a defense. When he finished, this time without applause, he took his dais seat next to Cronkite. Walter, puzzled, like many of us, over the Secretary's overreaction, asked him, "What was that all about?" Rogers, still angry, said something about refusing to be a whipping boy. As the program progressed, Rogers' characteristic amiability returned.

Rogers was no knee-jerk foe of the press freedom. He had served as an attorney for the *Washington Post*, which is hardly among our more docile publications. Perhaps he was in a bad mood over something that we learned about only a few days later.

It was that when Henry Kissinger, then National Security Adviser, addressed the American Newspaper Publishers Association at a luncheon in the same hotel, the Waldorf-Astoria, on the day of our dinner, the White House installed a secure telephone for him in the pantry off the Grand Ball Room, to be used in an emergency. The telephone was taken out that afternoon, evidently not considered necessary to be left for the Secretary of State.

At our 1975 dinner, Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger delivered a singularly somber speech, laden with dire descriptions of world-wide nuclear weapons capabilities. Lowell Thomas, the next speaker, began by asking the audience, "Now, wasn't that a light-hearted essay?" Only Schlesinger didn't join in the roar of laughter.

At one of our luncheons, the then Egyptian Ambassador to the U.N. and now Foreign Minister Meguid was the



scheduled speaker. He pointed out one of the guests to me and said, "That man is an Israeli newspaperman. I'll leave if he doesn't." This was before the Sadat visit to Israel and the Egyptians were, like other Arab countries, very prickly about recognition of Israel and contacts with Israelis.

I walked over to the Israeli and said, "Our speaker is threatening to leave if you don't. I am ready to tell him he doesn't have the option of selecting our guests even for his speech, but I leave it up to you." The Israeli said, "I'll leave in a few minutes." When he left, Meguid said to me, "That man is a gentleman and I will remember it."

I have thought often of my conduct in that affair. I was wrong in principle and I like to think it was uncharacteristic of me. I would not do it again. But now in an age when "pragmatism" is being cherished—witness what they're saying about George Bush's cabinet selections, as opposed to ideologues—I take comfort in knowing that Meguid was a key figure at Camp David and has won many friends in the free media, including Israelis.

I, too, could go on and on, like Lowell "Tommy" Thomas. I'm sure that on further thought other occurrences, more interesting or important, would come to mind. For now, I offer the above—and my recollection of an OPC event in 1973 when Lloyd Bentsen was the speaker. He was no Jack Kennedy.

OPC In Dictionary

The OPC is listed in Webster's New World Dictionary of media and communications. Listing reads: "OPC Overseas Press Club, a New York organization of Journalists with foreign news experience." Compiled by Richard Weiner, dictionary on language of the media is published by Simon & Schuster.

New Members

By SUSAN BAXTER

Margaret Staats Simmons, Active Resident, editor-in-chief of *Readers Digest-Travel Publications, Inc.* and working for Travel Holiday. She has worked as feature editor for *Conde Nast Traveler* and as senior editor for *Connoisseur*.

Jacqueline Albert Simon, Active Resident, since 1980 associate editor and U.S. bureau chief, *Politique Internationale*, Institute of French Studies, a European Quarterly on Foreign Affairs published in France.

Stephen P. Bergin, associate Non-Resident, copywriter for OMNIBUS A.G. in Southington, Ct. He was military correspondent for the *Waterbury Republican-American* in Vietnam, 1972, and columnist for the *Waterbury American*.

Maria J. R. Ferris, Active Resident, an independent producer/host of *Common Concerns*, a public affairs Cable TV Show. She was with CTN-NJ Cable Ch. 8 and WWFM Radio, Trenton, N.J. She is already writing for the OPC Bulletin.

Anthony Paul, Active Overseas is editor-in-chief of *Business Tokyo* magazine and a former editor for *Reader's Digest's* Australia, New Zealand, Asia and International Editions.

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Linda Goetz Holmes, Associate Non-Resident, free lance writer/reporter daughter of the late **Theodore B. Goetz** news bureau chief/vice president Macy Westchester Newspapers (now part of Gannett chain). She's working on a book about an Australian prisoner-of-war journalist on whose story the book and film *Bridge Over The River Kwai* was based. She has been a reporter/feature writer for *Shelter Island Reporter* and *The Suffolk Times*. **Kathryn A. Keller**, Associate Resident, is a self employed writer/editor and was with *Mademoiselle* for eight years.

Carlos Lameiro, Associate Resident, Director of the Portuguese National Tourist Office. He started as architect and participated in the construction of Lisbon's Hotel Ritz. He later left to serve as President of the Madeira Tourist Board, then was commissioned Director of Portuguese National Tourist Board in New York. After a brief leave of absence, he returned to the board as Deputy Director in 1982.

Clarissa McNair, Active Overseas, lives in Switzerland and is correspondent for Intercontinental Press. Previously she was editor/producer/newscaster for Vatican Radio at the Vatican.

OPC Free Press Action Update

By MEYER LURIE

The death sentence and hanging of Frazad Bazoft, the London *Observer* correspondent charged with espionage in Iraq, have been condemned by the Overseas Press Club. Before the execution was carried out, the OPC wired Iraqi President Saddam Hussein that it was shocked and appalled by the sentence and pleaded for its revocation.

"The OPC deplores the unfair, closed trial process that took place. We think it is shameful that Mr. Bazoft was represented by a lawyer appointed by your government, that he was denied access to British legal counsel, and that journalists and representatives of the *Observer* were barred from the trial," the wire, signed by OPC President **Leonard Saffir** and **Norman A. Schorr**, chairman of the Freedom of Information Committee, said. "In view of the questionable nature of the charges, and the so-called 'confession', we think that the death sentence is cruel beyond belief. The seeming haste to implement it is difficult to understand."

In London, Great Britain's Press Association reported on an OPC statement that hit out at "publicity-seeking" members of Parliament for their "shamefull" comments about the Iranian-born Bazoft. The OPC assailed statements like those of MP Rupert Allason claiming that "it is quite possible that Bazoft was an Israeli spy" Schorr said they had "almost legitimized the rigged trial of a man whose editor confirmed he was a hard-working freelance journalist."

"All people of good will should be working instead to stop the current rampant abuse of responsible journalists," Schorr added.

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